

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 03527 01 OF 02 051815Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 NSC-05 MC-02 H-02 OMB-01 /068 W

----- 016096

R 051802Z EAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9594

SECDEF

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 03527

DEFENSE FOR IQA. ODDR&E. CSAF. OSAF

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR. BEXP, AWACS. UK, NATO

SUBJ: AEW/AWACS - ANOTHER COMMENT FROM A BRITISH MP

REF: LONDON 3081

1. THE FOLLOWING LETTER APPEARED IN THE TIMES OF 3/4/76  
FROM PHILIP GMODHART, CONSERVATIVE MP FOR BROMLEY, BECKEN-  
HAM:

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LONDON 03527 01 OF 02 051815Z

"IN HIS INFORMATIVE ARTICLE 'WE MUST NOT WELSH ON NATO'S EARLY WARNING SYSTEM' (FEBRUARY 26), MY COLLEAGUE JULIAN CRITCHLEY TELLS US THAT THE U.S. SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE GAVE THE GO-AHEAD IN FEBRUARY 1975 FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE Ongoing AIRBORNE WARNING AND CONTROL SYSTEM FOR THE DEFENCE OF NORTH AMERICA. BEFORE PRODUCTION BEGAN THE AMERICAN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE HAD SPENT AS MUCH MONEY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF AWACS AS GREAT BRITAIN HAS SPENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONCORDE.

"THE AMERICAN SENATE, HOWEVER, HAS VIEWED THE WHOLE AWACS PROJECT WITH CONSIDERABLE SCEPTICISM AND THE ORDERS FOR AMERICA'S OWN AIR DEFENCE HAVE BEEN CUT TO THE BONE AND BEYOND. SOME OF THE CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM OF THIS ENORMOUSLY EXPENSIVE PROJECT HAS PROVED TO BE UNFOUNDED, BUT THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH THE AMERICAN AIR FORCE CAN PERSUADE CONGRESS TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY FUNDS IS TO GET AMERICA'S EUROPEAN ALLIES INTERESTED IN THE PROJECT.

"FOR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES THIS IS NOT AN UNUSUAL SITUATION. WE KNOW FROM BITTER EXPERIENCE THAT ANY IMPORTANT DEFENCE PROJECT STANDS A BETTER CHANCE OF SURVIVING SUCCESSIVE DEFENCE CUTS IF IT IS A MULTINATIONAL PROJECT, SUCH AS THE MRCA, THAN IT DOES IF IT IS A DEVELOPMENT UNDERTAKEN BY ONE COUNTRY ALONE -- SUCH AS TSR2. DIPLOMATIC PRESSURES ENSURE THAT MULTINATIONAL PROJECTS SURVIVE LONGER. THE AWACS CONTROVERSY IS INTERESTING, HOWEVER, BECAUSE THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE AMERICAN DEFENCE DEPARTMENT HAS HAD TO ADAPT THIS PARTICULAR PLOY AND ATTEMPT TO WIN OVER CONGRESSIONAL OPINION BY CONVERTING AWACS INTO A MULTINATIONAL PROJECT.

"THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT SENIOR NATO COMMANDERS WANT TO SEE AWACS ADOPTED BY THE ALLIANCE. IT IS MORE FLEXIBLE AND TECHNOLOGICALLY INTERESTING THAN RIVAL SYSTEMS AND IT CAN BE DEVELOPED STILL FURTHER -- WHICH MEANS OF COURSE THAT IT CAN BECOME MORE EXPENSIVE. ON THE OTHER HAND IT HAS BEEN ARGUED THAT THE GRUMMAN HAWKEYE E-2C CAN DO 80 PERCENT OF THE JOB AT A QUARTER OF THE COST. AND THEN, AS MY COLLEAGUE GEOFFREY PATTIE FORCIBLY POINTED OUT IN YOUR COLUMNS ON FEBRUARY 12, THE HAWKER SIDDELEY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LONDON 03527 01 OF 02 051815Z

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 03527 02 OF 02 052049Z

61

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 NSC-05 MC-02 H-02 OMB-01 /068 W

----- 018563

R 051802Z EAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9595

SECDEF

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 03527

MARCONI ELLIOTT NIMROD PROJECT MUST ALSO BE CONSIDERED.

"MINISTERS AND POLITICIANS ARE IN NO POSITION TO  
PASS JUDGMENT ON THE TECHNICAL MERITS OF THE RIVAL SYS-  
TEMS, BUT BEFORE WE DO COMMIT OURSELVES TO A PROGRAMME  
COSTING AT LEAST POUNDS 900 MILLION, WE MUST BE SURE THAT  
THE RIGHT QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED AND THAT THE EXTRA  
CAPABILITY OF AWACS IS WORTH THE ENORMOUS EXTRA COST.  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LONDON 03527 02 OF 02 052049Z

"THERE ARE UNDERSTANDABLE PRESSURES FROM THE AMERI-

CAN DEFENCE DEPARTMENT AND THE PRINCIPAL AMERICAN CONTRAC  
OR BOEING TO GET A FAVORABLE DECISION AT THE NATO MINIS-  
TERIAL MEETING IN MAY. BUT IF THERE ARE BY THEN CONTINU-  
ING DOUBTS AS TO WHETHER THE RIGHT QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN  
ASKED AND ANSWERED, THE ARGUMENT FOR POSTPONING A DECISION  
WOULD BE VERY STRONG."

2. COMMENT: "CLIFF" CORNFORD, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, PROCURE-  
MENT EXECUTIVE, MOD, DREW OUR ATTENTION TO THIS LETTER'  
REFLECTING THAT "THERE IS SOME TRUTH" IN GOODHART'S  
OBSERVATINNS. GOODHART IS AN ABLE MP WITH A SOLID REPUTA-  
TION IN THE PARTY, WHO HAS, ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS, SPOKEN  
OUT ON DEFENSE ISSUES. "RESPECTABLY" PRO-AMERICAN ON MANY  
DEFENSE MATTEPS, GOODHART'S LETTER USEFULLY COMPLEMENTS  
AND "BALANCES (FROM A BRITISH POLITICAL/INDUSTRY VIEW-  
POINT) THE STRONGLY PRO-AWACS THRUST OF THE CRITCHLEY  
ARTICLE WHICH, SIMPLY BECAUSE IT IS SO PRO-AWACS, COULD  
BE DISCOUNTED BY THE SCEPTICAL.

ARMSTRONG

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MILITARY PLANS, PARTY MEETINGS, WARNING SYSTEMS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 05 MAR 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976LONDON03527  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** D760085-0100  
**From:** LONDON  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t197603111/aaaagglx.tel  
**Line Count:** 193  
**Locator:** TEXT ON MICROFILM, TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 LONDON 3081  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 24 MAR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <24 MAR 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <02 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 970923  
**Subject:** AEW/AWACS - ANOTHER COMMENT FROM A BRITISH MP  
**TAGS:** BEXP, UK, AWACS, NATO, PFOR  
**To:** DOD  
STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006